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Community, Allamakee emergency management, religious leaders

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*Country Christmas
Craft Boutique 30th
annual craft sale at
Postville Community
Schools this Saturday.
See page two for the
details*



Basketball season under way. Girls open regular season play. See sports for all the details

Wednesday, November 26, 2008

Postville Herald-Leader

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What's happening in and around Postville.....

Club of the Hour to meet December 1

Club of the Hour will meet December at the home of Diane Kruse. The program will be on Barbie Dolls and will be given by Sandie Helgerson and Fran Schager. Members are reminded to "Show or Tell about a favorite doll.

Contribute holiday cheer for special holiday section

We at The Herald-Leader are once again making plans for our annual holiday edition and as usual we need your help.

Recipes: Did your family discover a new recipe this holiday season. Please share family favorites and recipes that your children or grandchildren help you make.

Photos: Do you have a photo of your children with Santa Claus. Photos can be as recent as yesterday or as old as last century. Did the children ever receive a pet for Christmas? Maybe you have a photo of that special moment tucked away somewhere.

Letters to Santa: The Herald-Leader will print all letters to which are received by December 15. Letters will be forwarded to the North Pole in time for Santa and his elves to fill all the orders before he takes off on his journey Dec. 24.

We will also welcome special memories and notes to those in the military.

All items must be received by December 15 and the special section will reach your home on December 24. Call 563-864-3333 with questions or email us at phlnews@neitel.net.

Community, Allamakee Emergency Management, religious leaders, more rally to help those in need



Community Leaders, Allamakee Emergency Management, the City of Postville, religious leaders and many volunteers were among those meeting at City Hall last Friday to form a coalition to help the citizens of Postville who are affected by the recent happenings at Agriprocessors, Inc. The coalition will work together to meet the needs of the community by pulling together resources to help displaced workers.

Following the filing of Chapter 11 Bankruptcy by Agriprocessors, Inc. it has been several weeks since many displaced workers have received a paycheck. The Multicultural Center, located on the corner of Ogden and Tilden Streets, which shares space with KPVL Radio Postville, became the first site for a daily outreach source to provide food and personal items to those in need. Postville and many surrounding areas have come together and shown an outpouring of support for their needs. At the radio station much clothing and food items have been donated.

Those picking up food items have said they prefer foods that are already prepared. For many, who have no electricity or water, these types of meals are the easiest to prepare.

Many blankets, winter boots and jackets are also needed to help with the fast approaching winter season.

Volunteers, some of whom are employees of Agriprocessors, also have been preparing a hot meal once each day for displaced workers and their families. The local radio station, KPVL (89.1 FM) and its manager, Jeff Abbas, is overwhelmed with the huge response from the lo-

cal churches, individuals, organizations and people from surrounding communities. Appreciation is also extended to the City of Postville for the use of the Multicultural Center. A volunteer at the Center said, "The efforts of the community and surrounding areas will shine a good light on Postville."

There are many ways volunteers can help including giving monetary donations for the local food shelf. Also, many of the people who have worked at Agriprocessors are in need of rides as they search for new employment. Anyone willing to provide

rides, should call Carol Kress at First United Methodist Church in Decorah at 563-382-6459. Donations may also be left at the radio station until the central location is changed later this week to Turner Hall.

Will work resume?

Employees of Agriprocessors, Inc. continue to wonder when and if they will get paid and if they will be called back to work. Last Wednesday, November 19, Many employees who are uncertain of their futures here, asked for some answers from the management at the plant. By way of a press release, Poultry Operations Manager Menahem Brook said in a live interview with KWVL television, that once news is released to the plant, they will make sure the employees are notified. He assured them that paychecks will be issued before production is resumed.

As of Monday, November 24 no checks have been issued, and an authority with the bankruptcy court said employees should not expect checks this week.

Although rumors have spread through the community that a bus of workers from Illinois were here applying for jobs, Brook's statement said that definitely is not true.

As the unrest continued late last week throughout the community, troubles were also abounding within the Jewish community. Many Jewish families are also without money to buy food and the Kosher supply of food is dwindling.

The Jewish owners of the plant have also been hit hard by the latest developments as Sholom Rubashkin's request to be released from Prison was denied on Thursday, Nov. 20. He has been held in prison for over a week on alleged bank fraud charges. Rubashkin was being considered a flight risk after the former CEO's home was searched. It is al-

City Council declares disaster emergency in City of Postville

The Postville City Council, meeting in regular session Monday evening, recognized Darwin Ellis for his countless years of service to the community and presented him with a plaque to commemorate his years as building inspector and zoning administrator.

Shelly Howe, director of Allamakee Economic Development, was at the meeting to update the Council on her department's efforts. She thanked the Council for Postville's continued support and asked them to continue to do so. She said the area-wide website has had over two million hits and has brought many tourists and job seekers to the area. She added that billboards have been placed in the Madison, Wisc. and Chicago areas to help entice people to visit and relocate to Northeast Iowa.

Howe added that her department also has a grant program which last year awarded funds to several Postville entities including the swimming pool, YMCA, the K-9 Drug Dog program and helped fund a new water fountain. Recently, she added, they gave a \$1000 to the Postville Food Pantry.

She also explained many other services available and told the Council Allamakee County Economic Development is willing to help with the current crisis in Postville by helping to find ways to reopen Agriprocessors. Howe said her office can contact the offices of Senators Grassley and Harkin to urge them to help with Postville's needs.

The Council adopted an ordinance amendment which requires all renters to pay a \$250 utility deposit when renting a Postville property for the first time. The ordinance is to be reviewed annually. Council person Milo Heins voted against the ordinance change.

*Postville City Council
CONTINUED ON PAGE11*

Griffin's shop, "Silkin Expressions" showcases her creative talents



Susan Griffin stands beside one of the Christmas displays at her shop, Silkin Expressions, in rural Postville. Susan is having an open house at her shop this weekend.

When Susan Griffin, her husband, Glenn and their daughter, Pam, made the trek from LaPorte, Indiana to Postville, Iowa, Susan left behind her flower and gift business, "Silkin Expressions."

Susan said, "I had attended floral design school in Cleveland, Ohio after high school and worked in flower shops until our daughter was born."

With having a small infant, Susan found it easier to work from her home and began doing weddings and other events at home. She added, "U. S. Highway 20 went in front of our home so it was easy for people to get to my place when wanting to discuss a special event that involved floral arrangements."

As their rural farm in Indiana, which was just a short distance from Chicago, became more and more congested, Glenn wanted to move to an area where his farming operation would not be interrupted by traffic and other influences of the city. Having talked to someone at one of daughter Pam's horse shows about the availability of farms near Postville, the Griffins packed up and ended up at their new farming operation in rural Postville.

*Community Coalition
CONTINUED ON PAGE 11*

*Griffin opens Silkin Expression on Family Farm
CONTINUED ON PAGE11*



Displaced workers from Agriprocessors are given bags of groceries at the Multicultural Center last week. Many volunteers have worked tirelessly to make sure that those without jobs do not go hungry and without shelter and clothing. The emergency shelter is in the process of being set up at Turner Hall on East Greene Street.

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NOTICE TO ALLAMAKEE COUNTY RESIDENTS AND LANDOWNERS

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) has been working to update county-wide Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) for Allamakee County and its incorporated areas. On September 12, 2008, preliminary copies of a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) were provided in a county-wide format.

These maps are available for public viewing in the Allamakee County Planning and Development Office between the hours of 8 am to 3 p.m. Comments are also welcome on the non-technical information listed on the maps for a period of 30 days which will end on November 30, 2008. Comments regarding non-technical information (which may include missing or incorrectly spelled street names, labels, or other cartographic or topographical errors on the FIRMS) shall be done in a written format and mailed or dropped off at the Allamakee County Planning and Development Office, Courthouse, Waukon, IA 52172. Those comments will be reviewed and forwarded to a FEMA Project Manager for a review.

If you have any questions regarding the public comment period or preliminary FIRM, please contact Roger Benson, NFIP Specialist at (515) 251-3664. If you have any questions concerning mapping issues in general, contact FEMA Map Assistance Center at 1-877-FEMA-MAP.

Minutes of the Meetings of the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors Monday, November 17, 2008

(Unofficial Minutes)
Board met as preadjourned. Board members present Kuhse, Campbell, and Burke. All board members voting "AYE" unless noted.

John Smola, Paula Rehan-Hill, Jean Carroll, Mary Jane White, and Deb Winke present.

08.363-Motion by Campbell and second by Kuhse to approve agenda as posted and minutes of Nov. 10, 2008. Motion carried.

Mary Jane White had updates on pending litigation.

08.364-Motion by Campbell and second by Kuhse to go into closed session at 8:03 A.M. per Code of Iowa Chapter 21.5 C. Campbell Aye, Kuhse Aye, Burke Aye. Motion carried.

08.365-Motion by Campbell and second by Kuhse to go out of closed session at 8:37 A.M. Campbell Aye, Kuhse Aye, Burke Aye. Motion carried.

Dave Dunklee, Lisa Moose, Nancy Haberichter, and Frank Gaines present.

Under Public Comment - Dave Dunklee had information on Conservation Building to be constructed on the Columbus Property near Lansing, Iowa.

Lori Hesse present.
Lori Hesse informed board of Elaine Eadie's letter of resignation stating the last day will be Dec. 31, 2008 and last day of working Nov. 25, 2008.

08.366-Motion by Campbell and second by Kuhse to approve tax abatement for Devon Schlegel for BLL Loc @ Allamakee Co Hwy Dept. MH Park (Cabin). Motion carried.

08.367-Motion by Campbell and second by Kuhse to accept and place on file Groves Manure Management Plan Annual Update. Motion carried.

08.368-Motion by Campbell and second by Kuhse to accept and place on file De Su Manure Management Plan New Construction. Motion carried.

08.369-Motion by Campbell and second by Kuhse to table Watershed Bill from Jim Hanson Construction, L.L.C. Motion carried.

Brian Ridenour present.
08.370-Motion by Campbell and second by Kuhse to approve Concrete Paving Plan on Great River Road. Motion carried.

Board adjourned to meet on Monday, November 24, 2008 at 8:45 a.m.

Allamakee County Board of Supervisors
Lennie Burke, Chairperson
ATTEST: Mary O'Neill, Auditor
wk 48

PUBLIC NOTICE

County offices in the Allamakee County Courthouse will be closed on Thursday and Friday, November 27 and 28, 2008 in observance of Thanksgiving. Also included are the following outlying county departments: Rural recycling center, Secondary Roads and shops, Veterans Affairs, Relief Office and Conservation. (The County Sheriff's office is open all holidays.)

wk 48

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF POSTVILLE, IOWA

November 13, 2008

A special meeting of the City Council of Postville, Iowa, was held in the Council Chambers on November 13, 2008, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Mayor Robert O. Penrod presiding.

On call of the roll, the following Council Members were present: Ross Malcom Virginia Medberry, Milo Heins and Jeff Reinhardt. Absent: Larry Moore.

* Larry Moore arrived 5:05 p.m. Council Member Heins made a motion to approve the agenda as posted. Seconded by Malcom. Carried.

Discussion was held on Zoning Code Section 302.1 front yard parking. Public comments were requested. Citizen Maryls Sowers made comment of the look of the property to allow parking in the front yard without concrete parking pads. Trevor Siebert made comment homes that with no other parking options available were a problem. The hearing was closed. Council Member Medberry made a motion to table the discussion and review again after the 1st of the year 2009. Seconded by Heins. Carried.

Attorney Loomis updated the Council on the property at 123 E. Williams. The Executor was notified of the municipal infractions condemning the property by the City. It was the decision of the Executor that they are going to let the property go to tax sale.

Gal Investments, Gabay Menchem addressed the council with regards to the city procedure and deposits collected on utility accounts. The current deposit for tenants needing utility services is \$75. The Council agreed the fee should be increased and will set it at \$250 changing the Ordinance. Council Member Reinhardt made a motion to set the public hearing for the first reading for November 24, 2008. Seconded by Malcom. Carried. Discussion was held on the city taking credit cards for payment. The City will check with the League of Cities on programs available for credit card payments. Mr. Menchem also requested the City Council to forgive his disconnect and reconnect fees on properties not paid. Council Member Moore informed Mr. Menchem that the Council would need a plan from him before such a decision can be made, since several of his accounts are outstanding.

A work session was held on a Housing Code Ordinance. Citizens present were Christina Drahos, Barb Senft, Trevor Siebert, Gabay Menchem and Marlys Sowers. Attorney Anne Loomis summarized the last meeting changes the group completed the code. Council Member Malcom made a motion to set the first reading of the new ordinance for November 24, 2008. Seconded by Medberry. Carried.

Council Member Malcom made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Heins. Carried. Adjournment at 6:33 p.m.

CITY CLERK

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Board of Education Meeting

November 18, 2008

President Brad Rekow called the special meeting of the Postville Board of Education to order at 6:37 p.m. on Tuesday, November 18, 2008, with the following members present: Jeff Cox, Jamie Smith, Dan Schutte, Laura Lubka.

Dr. David Else reviewed the superintendent search timelines:

December 9 – quarter finalists to the board

December 11 – start interviewing candidates

President Rekow left the meeting at 6:57.

Dr. Else helped the board to design interview questions. Members divided up the qualifications and are to develop questions around the qualifications. Questions are to be sent to Clara Lensing within the next week.

The schedule for the day of an interview was reviewed. There will be a community reception, "meet and greet," for each candidate.

Board Member Dan Schutte left the meeting at 8 p.m.

The quarterfinalists will be presented to the Board on Monday, December 8 at 5 p.m. The regular December board meeting will be moved back to 7:30 on that evening.

Motion by Cox, second by Smith to adjourn the meeting at 8:15. Carried unanimously.

Brad K. Rekow, President
Clara M. Lensing, Secretary

Community Coalition CONT. FROM PAGE 1

leged that the agents searching the home found \$20,000 in cash and silver coins and the passports of several of his children in a travel bag in the home's master bedroom.

Thursday, November 20 brought fears and uncertainty to the community as threats surfaced against the Rubashkin family and local businesses. Allegedly, former employees, who are now without money for food or rent, had threatened to rob local businesses or the Rubashkin family. Local police, when asked, said they had stepped up security to make sure everyone was safe. No incidents of robbery have been reported as of press time.

Coalition established

Friday, November 21, community leaders and many other organizations came together in an effort to help alleviate the burden placed on those people who no longer have an income.. Allamakee Emergency Management, along with the City of Postville, local religious leaders and community volunteers, have established a coalition to help the citizens of Postville recover from recent happenings. The team will be tasked with meeting the immediate needs of the community by pulling together resources to help the displaced workers from Agriprocessors.

It was also noted that more volunteers are needed so the local food pantry can be open at least two to three times per week. Currently, the pantry is only open on Wednesday afternoons.

During Friday's meeting at the Postville City Hall immediate and upcoming needs were identified. The coalition also recognized the need for all citizens to come together and support the needs of the community. Plans are being made to centralize resources in Turner Hall within the next few days. Those in attendance at the first coalition meeting were in agreement that multiple phone lines and

wireless internet need to be installed at the Hall before it can become a viable site. City Clerk Darcy Radloff told The Herald-Leader that the lines were being installed Monday, Nov. 24. More information will emerge from a meeting scheduled for yesterday, at 9 a.m. at the Postville City Hall.

This upcoming week hopes to bring a beginning of relief and hope as the City is awarded grant money from Economic Development which will be administered by Northeast Iowa Community Action. The amount of the grant, nearly \$700,000 will help those in need with food, rent and utilities. A \$10,000 grant from the Evangelical Lutheran Church may also be freed up to help with the relief effort.

City Council CONT. FROM PAGE 1

A housing code ordinance was also adopted at Monday evening's meeting. The code, which had been written by a group of landlords and the Council, pertains mostly to rental inspection, inspection fees and penalties.

The Council approved the snowmobile route and approval of sign placement as proposed by the Clayton County Snowbirds.

A purchase request by Chief Mike Halse for the purchase of a radio was approved. The radio, to be purchased from Racom out of Decorah, will be used to replace an older radio. The old radio will now be used for backup purposes. The cost of the new radio being purchased is \$674.15.

Following a written complaint by residents Pat and Paul Miene, the Council agreed to allow garbage pickup in the alleys from November 1 to April 1. The change will take place following the Thanksgiving holiday.

Mayor Penrod explained to the Council the importance of a coordinated effort to help those affected by the recent closing of Agriprocessors, Inc. He said that a grant from Economic Development of nearly \$700,000 will help get relief efforts under way. The Council, to show their solidarity, adopted "A Resolution declaring an emergency disaster declarations in the City of Postville."

It states: Whereas, The City of Postville has suffered from an economic and humanitarian disaster occurring throughout and during the summer of 2008, causing severe hardship to public and citizens, disruption of utility services, endangerment of health an safety to the citizens of Postville, all of which contributed to the potential for disasters; and

Whereas, The City of Postville is a small community with limited funds, unable to sustain the losses incurred in these circumstances. In order to meet the needs of the citizens of the City it is necessary to declare that due to the foregoing, a State of Emergency does now exist within the City of Postville.

Wherefore, The City of Postville hereby authorizes the expenditure of grant funds from all available sources, and applications to the State of Iowa for assistance as provided for under the Code of Iowa.

Signed: November 24, 2008 by Mayor Penrod and Clerk Radloff.

"Silkin Expressions" CONT. FROM PAGE 1

Although Susan did not pursue her floral business the first few years after the family moved to Postville, her creative side was always busy. She said, "I began doing scrapbooking for my own enjoyment and it wasn't long until I was having scrapbooking workshops and became a consultant for "Creative Memories."

When they moved to their current farm, off the Gunder Road on 120th Street, Susan began to think about having her own shop.

She said, "I asked Glenn if I could have one of the buildings on the farm to do my thing and, luckily, he agreed."

She added, "The current shop was a drive-through corn crib which we completely gutted."

The buidling, which currently has no resemblance to the corn crib, was first envisioned by a sketch Susan drew. With Glenn being a carpenter by trade, the couple did the majority of the work themselves. She said, "We originally thought the project would take two years, but with good weather on our side, we were done in a little over a year and were able to

have Pam's graduation party here when she graduated with the PHS class of 2007."

When reopening her shop, Susan decided to keep the name the same. She said, "It was the easiest for tax purposes to keep using 'Silkin Expressions' and it was a name I liked so I decided to go with it."

"Silkin Expressions", Susan said, is open on weekends and most weekdays by appointment. She said, "I do help on the farm, so I suggest people call ahead if they want to come out on a weekday."

With the opening of "Silkin Expressions" Susan has not given up on the scrapbooking as she has monthly scrapbooking workshops and many of her clients come out more often to work on their scrapbooks or to get supplies.

She also holds flower classes at the shop and within the last month she has had an adult class through NICC and a class for high school students with kids from Postville High School.

Susan said, "I got into the 'Flowers for Kids' program through my daughter's school when she was in middle school. It promotes kids and flowers and teaches kids how to take care of flowers."

Susan has also hosted many clubs and organizations at the shop including Club of the Hour where the 24 women present were given the opportunity to make their own fall arrangement. She is currently thinking about having a Christmas Centerpiece design class.

She said, "It is fun having clubs here for meetings and for scrapbooking workshops. Scrapbooking is an inexpensive way of preserving what is important to families."

A versatile designer, Susan says she enjoys creating

pieces for weddings and funerals. She said, "I especially enjoy doing funeral work as I can create a special piece to honor a loved one."

"I have had excellent response from those who have seen my designs. People comment on the unique designs I create, which I attribute to the Chicago influence," Susan added.

Some of the things offered at Susan's shop include, soy candles, gift items, "For the Journey" handmade jewelry from Minnesota, silk arrangements, plates, wreaths, wall hangings, quote frames, tapestry with a message, throws, fresh flowers and more.

The tapestries, Susan said, have become a nice item to incorporate into a funeral arrangement. They can also be used as table runners or placed on an easel.

The quote frames also make a unique gift. One quote, "Chasing our dreams together" would be especially appropriate for a wedding gift.

This holiday season Susan is featuring a stocking stuffer corner with inexpensive gift ideas. She will also have live Poinsettias to grace any holiday decor.

Susan invites everyone to come out and see what she has to offer. She is having an open house this weekend on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. Everything at "Silkin Expressions" will be 15% off during the open house. To get to the shop take Gunder Road to 120th Street and follow 120th until you see the sign at 11796 120th Street. All who attend the open house will be greeted with Susan's friendly smile and will receive a complimentary red rose when they leave.

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